

**A THREE-DAY INSTITUTE ON PEACE AND JUSTICE STUDIES PROGRAM
DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CATHOLIC SOCIAL TRADITION**

IMPERIAL BOTANICAL BEACH HOTEL, ENTEBBE, UGANDA

NOVEMBER 7-9, 2017

ARCHBISHOP J. B. ODAMA'S REMARKS

1. Salutations to:

- The organizers
- Funders
- Leaders from various Institutions
- Uganda Martyrs University for hosting the Institute
- Participants

2. It is my singular honor and privilege to be invited to participate and share my thoughts in a three-day Institute on Peace and Justice Studies Program Development within the Catholic Tradition. I wish to extend my thanks to you all for the kind invitation and to also thank Uganda Martyrs University, which is serving as the local host, for their generosity and availability to enable the realization of this special encounter.

3. I was informed that this event is mainly for Faculty of Catholic universities and higher institutes of learning with peace and conflict studies programs in Africa and the rest of the world. I wish to commend the initiative and all your efforts of ensuring that our Mother Church plays her spiritual obligation of promoting peace and justice, which is

truly at the centre of her mission. The centrality of peace making, peace building, and peace sustenance in our world, on our continent, and in our countries cannot be underscored. There is no doubt that this gathering and all the sharing and exchanges that will take place are timely and vital as we peer into our future.

4. Equally important, I wish to acknowledge the good work and kind support from the various funding organizations and institutions that funded this event, namely:

- The Association of Catholic Universities and Higher Institutes of Africa and Madagascar followed by,
- The Centre for Social Justice and Ethics at the Catholic University of eastern Africa,
- Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations, Nairobi, Kenya,
- The Catholic Peacebuilding Network, University of Notre Dame
- Catholic Relief Services plus,
- The Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies of the Keough School of Global Affairs at the University of Notre Dame,
- The Institut für Theologie und Frieden and
- The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University, and lastly but not least,
- The Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego.

Your financial and moral support of this programme cements our own enthusiasm and engagements in the various justice and peace related undertakings and awareness's.

5. I note with sincere gratitude and appreciation that this conference is a firm response to the recommendations that were developed at the conference of the Catholic Episcopate of the Great Lakes region for Peace and Reconciliation, which was held in Burundi in 2010. The recommendation reflects a strong affirmation that the Catholic Church is ever willing and committed to promote peace and justice for the well being of God's people and in service of the Heavenly Kingdom.
6. In Uganda and in the region, the Catholic Church has been active in bring about peace and justice. The Church has been active in restoring peace and order in the Northern part of this country as well as through Caritas Uganda to offer support to refugees who seek refuge from our neighbors specifically DR Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan. With the Catholic presence now in higher education, we would wish to have scholarship in the field and thus this meeting is an opportunity if it would come up with ways through which justice and peace can be taught and researched using the social tradition of the Catholic Church.
7. One needs to know that the recommendations of the Catholic Episcopate of the Great Lakes region on peace and reconciliation gave

birth to the Proposal for Research in Education for Peace, and that this was approved by the General Assembly of the Association of Catholic Universities and Higher Institutes of Africa and Madagascar in 2014, in Johannesburg. It is great joy to see this positive evolution that gives us so much hope that together we can do more and that we can invite each other to pave steady roads to peace and development. One of the achievements that the Catholic universities and Catholic professors of Justice and peace would be to link the Catholic tradition to their scholarship.

8. One of the landmark achievements you can come up with in this Justice and Peace Institute would be to resolve to promote synergy between the Institutions and the Catholic Church in the region, by initiating close collaboration between the universities, research centers, justice and peace commissions, various levels of Caritas and social communications services. The Catholic Church in Uganda and her sister agencies will embrace and support this very important cause and the various initiatives aimed at its promotion.
9. I would like to assure you that the Catholic Church in Uganda supports your effort of reviewing and strengthening the existing peace studies programs and developing new programs. I sincerely believe that this conference will enable you to share ideas and experiences from your respective institutions, and thus you will be able to embed in peace and

conflict programs cardinal issues of freedom, justice, and equality in the light of the Social Teaching of the Church.

10. As the Chair of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, I will share the aim of this conference with my brother Bishops and urge them to support your efforts as we explore ways on how these academic programs can learn from and contribute to the peace and justice work of the wider Catholic community and the wider society.
11. Having lived in conflict times for quite a long time and having dedicated much of my pastoral life in working for reconciliation, peace, and justice, I wish to share this with you that I feel particularly honored to be part of this important meeting and I wish that I continue to be part of this initiative. As you explore possibilities of collaboration between universities and institutes of higher learning in the field of research, student faculty exchanges and improving access to academic resources through virtual libraries and other methods, be assured of our blessings and moral support.
12. Lastly and more importantly, I urge and encourage University Managers and Academics here present to urgently support this cause and have it realized in your respective Universities.
13. I wish you blessings and success in your efforts.